

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing to Claims:

Claim 1. (original) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator, having a composition comprising 0.03 mass % or less of C, 16-45 mass % of Cr, 0.03 mass % or less of N, 0.1-5.0 mass % of Mo, wherein a total of the C content and the N content satisfies 0.03 mass % or less; a balance portion is comprised of Fe and unavoidable impurities; with respect to Al, Cr, and Fe contained in a passive film on a surface of the stainless steel an atomic ratio of Cr/Fe is 1 or greater; and an atomic ratio of Al/(Cr+Fe) is less than 0.10.

Claim 2. (original) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator, having a composition comprising 0.03 mass % or less of C, 0.03 mass % or less of N, 20-45 mass % of Cr, and 0.1-5.0 mass % of Mo, wherein a total of the C content and the N content satisfies 0.03 mass % or less; a balance portion is comprised of Fe and unavoidable impurities; with respect to Al, Cr, and Fe contained in a passive film on a surface of the stainless steel an atomic ratio of Cr/Fe is 1 or greater, and an atomic ratio of Al/(Cr+Fe) is less than 0.05.

Claim 3. (currently amended) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to

~~claim 1 any one of claims 1 and 2~~, wherein in addition to the composition, the stainless steel comprises at least one selected from a group of items (1)-(4):

- (1) Si: 1.0 mass % or less;
- (2) Mn: 1.0 mass % or less;
- (3) Al: 0.001-0.2 mass % or less; and
- (4) Ti or Nb: 0.01-0.5 mass %; or a total of Ti and Nb: 0.01-0.5 mass %.

Claim 4. (currently amended) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to ~~claim 1 any one of claims 1 to 3~~, wherein, of oxygens contained in the passive film, an atomic ratio of O(M)/O(H) between an oxygen O(M) present in the state of a metal oxide and an oxygen O(H) present in the state of a metal hydroxide is 0.9 or less.

Claim 5. (currently amended) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to ~~claim 1 any one of claims 1, 3, and 4~~, wherein the Cr content is 20 to 45 mass %.

Claim 6. (cancelled)

Claim 7. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 2, wherein in addition to the composition, the stainless steel comprises at least one selected from a group of items (1)-(4):

- (1) Si: 1.0 mass % or less;
- (2) Mn: 1.0 mass % or less;
- (3) Al: 0.001-0.2 mass % or less; and
- (4) Ti or Nb: 0.01-0.5 mass %; or a total of Ti and Nb: 0.01-0.5 mass %.

Claim 8. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 2, wherein, of oxygens contained in the passive film, an atomic ratio of O(M)/O(H) between an oxygen O(M) present in the state of a metal oxide and an oxygen O(H) present in the state of a metal hydroxide is 0.9 or less.

Claim 9. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 3, wherein, of oxygens contained in the passive film, an atomic ratio of O(M)/O(H) between an oxygen O(M) present in the state of a metal oxide and an oxygen O(H) present in the state of a metal hydroxide is 0.9 or less.

Claim 10. (new) (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 7, wherein, of oxygens contained in the passive film, an atomic ratio of O(M)/O(H) between an oxygen O(M) present in the state of a metal oxide and an oxygen O(H) present in the state of a metal hydroxide is 0.9 or less.

Claim 11. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 3, wherein

the Cr content is 20 to 45 mass %.

Claim 12. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 4, wherein the Cr content is 20 to 45 mass %.

Claim 13. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 7, wherein the Cr content is 20 to 45 mass %.

Claim 14. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 8, wherein the Cr content is 20 to 45 mass %.

Claim 15. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 9, wherein the Cr content is 20 to 45 mass %.

Claim 16. (new) A stainless steel for a proton-exchange membrane fuel cell separator according to claim 10, wherein the Cr content is 20 to 45 mass %.

Claim 17. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 1 is used for the separator.

Claim 18. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 2 is used for the separator.

Claim 19. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 3 is used for the separator.

Claim 20. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 4 is used for the separator.

Claim 21. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 5 is used for the separator.

Claim 22. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 7 is used for the separator.

Claim 23. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 8 is used for the separator.

Claim 24. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 9 is used for the separator.

Claim 25. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 10 is used for the separator.

Claim 26. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 11 is used for the separator.

Claim 27. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 12 is used for the separator.

Claim 28. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 13 is used for the separator.

Claim 29. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 14 is used for the separator.

Claim 30. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 15 is used for the separator.

Claim 31. (new) A proton-exchange membrane fuel cell formed to comprise a solid polymer film, an electrode, and a separator, wherein the stainless steel according to claim 16 is used for the separator.